

Guide for First Time Attendees

A note: Welcome! We're glad you're here! This guide was put together by members of the American Geophysical Union Hydrology Section Student Subcommittee ([H3S](#)) with help from the wider AGU community in hopes of making the AGU Fall Meeting less overwhelming. The tips below are based on experiences from veteran attendees about what they've learned over the years. This guide is meant for everyone, and not one section in particular. Many of the guides and tips are also applicable for virtual attendees too! In this guide, you'll find information on some things to pack, what to wear, what to bring, how to interact with people, and things to see and do. We look forward to seeing you at the AGU Fall Meeting!



Before the Conference:

What to pack (in-person):

- Comfortable shoes and clothes -- you will be walking about 5 miles a day and on your feet a lot. Comfortable shoes are key! Also, many people will be wearing jeans and button down shirts. Do not feel like you have to wear a suit.
- Water bottle and hot drink thermos
- Masks, tissues, hand sanitizer, cough drops, cold medicine. Interacting with tons of people plus lack of sleep and stress will be hard on your immune system
- Backpack so you can keep your hands free
- Snacks to munch on during the day
- An umbrella or a rain jacket - something handy just in case
- Warm jacket, hat or scarf – San Francisco can have chilly weather!
- Some way to access the schedule -- phone with AGU app downloaded ([IOS](#) or [Android](#)), or printed
- pen/ notebook/ computer to take notes

Planning out your general schedule (in-person):

- Give yourself time to get from your Hotel to the Convention Center
- Look at the Scientific Program in Advance and use the “My Schedule” tool to make your schedule and export it to Excel or your calendar. (Walk through on this in the appendix)
- Account for how large the convention center is and factor in 15-20 minutes to get around. The [George R. Moscone Convention Center](#) is LARGE.
- Find some sessions that are interesting to you (both in and outside your area of study) to just sit at and listen. Hopping between talks in different sessions gets exhausting.
- Attend the various mixers/ socials/ trivia/ networking events that are put on in the evenings throughout the week. They're a fun way to meet people!
- SCHEDULE BREAKS -- AGU is a big conference with a lot of people and things to see and do. Don't run yourself ragged by trying to do and see everything. Give yourself time to rest.
- There is so much cool research happening and you might learn something!
 - Walk through a poster section that's not your own. AGU is a massively diverse scientific community
- You do not have to stay for the whole session, you can come for a single talk or two, but make sure you are courteous when you come and go (i.e. between presentations).

Planning out your general schedule (online):

- Make sure you have the correct time-zone showing online
- Look at the Scientific Program in Advance and use the “My Schedule” tool to make your schedule and export it to Excel or your calendar. (Walk through on this in the appendix)
- Give yourself breaks so you don't burn yourself out from staring at a computer all day.

- Find some sessions that are interesting to you (both in and outside your area of study) to just sit at and listen. It can be tricky to hop virtually between sessions and talks
- Try to see if there are talks you can watch in advance that speakers have loaded so you can come ready with questions!
- There is so much cool research happening and you might learn something!
 - Find an online poster section that's not your own. AGU is a massively diverse scientific community

Reaching out in Advance (in-person and online):

- Email people you want to talk to before the conference and try to schedule a lunch or coffee break with them at the conference.
- Connect with old colleagues and friends as well!
- Ask your advisor ahead of time to introduce you to some more senior scientists
- Reach out to H3S members or more senior PhDs or Post-docs in your group and ask them to be your conference buddy and help guide you around!
- Virtual attendees: schedule watch parties with others in your lab

At the Conference

Socializing/ Networking

- The line to get your nametag on the first day will likely be long... either try to get it the night before (they might have check-in at the airport), or wait until mid-day on the first day to avoid the lines.
- When you get your nametag, make sure you stop by the ribbon station and get a "first time attendee" ribbon to add! People are likely to reach out and make sure you aren't lost.
- Use poster sessions to network! Everyone is already chatting and socializing, find a group and join them!
- Include yourself in conversations where you know some people, like chats at the poster halls -- don't be afraid to start conversations with the more senior scientists!
- Get to know your peers! They will be your future colleagues that you might write proposals with and collaborate with in the future. They are as important as the big names in your field
- Ask people if you can join them for dinners or coffee breaks that you've been chatting with.
- For virtual attendees: use GatherTown and similar programs to connect with other virtual attendees

Appreciating the Science

- Reflect daily. At the end of the day (or first thing the following morning), write down the most interesting/exciting thing (or two things) you learned that day and why. At the end of the week, rank them.
- Take notes so you can stay engaged and remember the science later!
- Be sure to check out the Town Halls, Named Lectures, and Plenary Talks

Other General Tips:

- Get familiar with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority [routes and schedules](#)
- Don't carry too much stuff with you, your neck and back will thank you
- Go to the exhibitor hall! -- tons of free swag and fun place to shop around, and explore
- DO NOT FEEL OBLIGATED TO DRINK ALCOHOL. Many events like the poster sessions will offer alcoholic beverages, but that does not mean you have to drink. And do not let anyone peer pressure you into it. Non-alcoholic options will be available!

- Make sure you find people you do know and spend time with them. They'll help lessen the feeling of isolation.
- Virtual attendees: still schedule coffee meetings with others and engage as much as possible in hybrid and online sessions
- Other tips: <https://blogs.agu.org/geoedtrek/2018/12/06/first-timers-guide/>
- Check out the [Best Practices Guide](#) from Biogeosciences DEI Steering committee

Schedule and Scientific Program:

- [General format of the program](#)
- How to read session codes
 - Sessions look something like: Letter##Letter-##...
 - First letter is the section (e.g. H for Hydrology)
 - First number is which day it is (e.g. 1 is for Monday, 2 is Tuesday..., etc.)
 - Second number is the Block Number
 - Block 1 8-9:15 am
 - Block 2 9:45 to 11 am
 - Block 3 12:45 to 14:00
 - Block 4 14:30 to 15:45
 - Block 5: 16:00 to 18:00
 - Second Letter is the session
 - Last numbers are the ID number for the talk, poster, or eLightning presentation
 - So, a poster with the code: H35O-1203 can be read as “Hydrology Section, Wednesday, Block 5, Poster #1203
 - An oral presentation with the code: H32E-08 can be read as “Hydrology section, Wednesday, Block 5, Talk #8

Things to see and do in San Francisco:

Food and Drink Scene:

- [Greens Restaurant](#)
- *San Francisco's Chinatown*
- [Black-Owned Restaurants](#)
- [Women-Owned Restaurants](#)
- *Sourdough:*
 - <https://boudinbakery.com/>
- [Ghirardelli Square](#) (Chocolate)

Other Sites and things to do:

- Alcatraz Jail
- Golden Gate Bridge
- Palace of Fine Arts
- Lombard Street
- Exploratorium
- Fisherman's Wharf

Things to do if you're attending virtually

- Trivia, Gathertown, Braindates, and watch parties

Highlighting your talk/ poster

- Promote your talk, poster, or session with a cool [graphic!](#)
- Share details about your talk/ poster on Twitter!

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Updated AUG 2023

- Use hashtags like #AGU23
- #H3SatAGU
- Tell your friends about your talk/ poster and encourage them to come.
 - Return the favor by attending theirs
- Have collaborators, advisors, PIs plug your talk at the end of theirs!
- Invite people you meet at AGU to attend your presentation and be sure to attend theirs!
It's a great way to build connections, network, and learn new science!

Appendix: Scientific Program Information

What is the Scientific Program?

The “Scientific Program” is a very important resource for Fall Meeting. It is a schedule of all the different presentations and events, with times, rooms, presenters, and descriptions. With tens of thousands of events on the schedule, it can be daunting! Here are some tips to help navigate it and find the events for you.

How do I find it?

The Scientific Program can be found on the [AGU Fall Meeting Website](#). Click the “Schedule” tab up top, find the “Scientific Program” subtab, and select “View Program”. That will take you to the [Scientific Program](#). In the upper left corner, click the “Sign in” button to sign into your AGU account. This will allow you to develop a schedule and connect with presenters.

The screenshot shows the AGU Fall Meeting website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Sign In' and 'My Time' buttons. Below that is a banner for 'AGU FALL MEETING New Orleans, LA & Online Everywhere 13-17 December 2021'. A left sidebar contains a navigation menu with options like 'Home', 'Sign In', 'Search', 'Browse by Day', 'Browse by Sections', 'Keynote and Plenary', 'Named Lectures', 'Innovations', 'Union Sessions', 'eLightning', 'Poster Sessions', 'Virtual Only Sessions', 'Town Halls', 'Index Terms', and 'Meeting Resources'. The main content area is titled 'Create Your #AGU21 Fall Meeting Schedule' and contains several bullet points:

- **AGU Fall Meeting** is the primary gathering for Earth and space scientists, students, and those in affiliated fields to share scientific findings and identify innovative solutions. With in-person and worldwide online participation, attendees will have numerous opportunities to network with government regulators, scientific visionaries, and industry thought-leaders. Join our diverse community in New Orleans and online everywhere 13 - 17 December 2021.
 - Please note: Select online only content, including town halls and scientific workshops will be scheduled prior to the Fall Meeting.
- AGU Fall Meeting offers attendees the flexibility to create their own unique experiences with options to participate both in-person and online. After you customize your Fall Meeting schedule, share the sessions you're looking forward to on social media. Don't forget to use #AGU21!
- AGU expects only **fully vaccinated people** to attend #AGU21 in-person. Anyone who is not fully vaccinated (two weeks after the last required shot) should plan to attend online. Visit our [webpage](#) for additional details and resources on COVID-19.
- All attendees, including presenters and session chairs, must **register** for #AGU21 to attend Fall Meeting online or in-person. Early bird discount is available until 3 November. To access the AGU member discount, you must **renew your membership or join** by 3 November.
- Please note: The program schedule is new for #AGU21. Please take note of the new session time blocks and daily dedicated poster hall hours.

Below the text is a blue button that says 'REGISTER FOR #AGU21' and a smaller line of text: 'Early bird discount is available until 3 November'. At the bottom, there's a section for 'Presenters and Session Chairs' with a bullet point: 'Confirm Participation: If you are an AGU member, you can access the [Participant's Corner](#) using your AGU member log-in credentials to accept your invitation to attend the meeting and to receive your personalized schedule. If you are not an AGU member, please see the [AGU membership](#) page for more information.'

How do I keep track of the talks I'm interested in?

You can create a personal schedule, “My Schedule” and save talks and sessions you’re interested in and download that schedule to access later. If you know what section you want to browse, select “Browse by Sections” and click on the desired section. It’ll pull up all the sessions by that section in order of date and time. If there is a session you want, click on the ‘+’ next to it and it’ll turn into a calendar icon with a check mark (see below). If there is a specific presentation (oral, eLightning, or poster) within that session, click on the session title, scroll down, and you’ll see the individual presentations with the same ‘+’ icon to add that presentation to your calendar.

The image shows three examples of session listings from the AGU website. Each listing includes a star icon, a plus sign icon, and a calendar icon. The first listing is 'H11B Advances in Und Scales I Oral' with a location pin icon and the text 'Convention'. The second listing is 'H11C Prospects for Su' with a location pin icon and the text 'Convention'. The third listing is 'H11D River Networks: i' with a location pin icon and the text 'Convention'. The plus sign icons are highlighted in yellow, and the calendar icons have a checkmark, indicating that these sessions have been added to a personal schedule.

If there is a talk by someone you know, select the ‘search’ button on the scientific program side bar and type their name. Select the name, and you can see the presentations they are authors on.

Select those individual presentations to add them to your schedule.

When you have finished adding the talks, navigate to the calendar button with a check mark at the top of the page and select it. From there, you can see the session you have added to your personal schedule and can download it as ICS (for calendar), XLSX, or PDF (see image below).

AGU Guide Updated AUG 2023

Downloading your schedule allows you to avoid navigating the scientific program during the conference which can get overloaded.

My Schedule

[DOWNLOAD AS ICS](#) [DOWNLOAD AS EXCEL](#) [DOWNLOAD AS PDF](#)



My Schedule Restore

This is your personal schedule ONLY. Registration to attend the meeting or special events and sessions is required.
All times in the downloadable .ics file are in GMT(UTC)



[Add Event](#)

Monday, 13 December 2021



09:00 - 10:15 ⌚

★   H11D
River Networks: Connecting Forms and Functions I Oral
📍 Convention Center - New Orleans Theater A



10:45 - 12:00 ⌚

★   H12D
River Networks: Connecting Forms and Functions II Oral
📍 Convention Center - New Orleans Theater A

12:15 - 13:15 ⌚

★   Presidential Forum Lecture: Dr. Robert D Bullard
📍 Convention Center - Great Hall, Prow Main Stage

17:00 - 19:00 ⌚

★   H15D-1074
The Influence of Topography on Discharge and Specific Conductivity in the Hotel Gulch Watershed in Central Colorado
Samantha Motz
📍 Convention Center - Poster Hall, D-F